

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. Claims 1-10 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art taken singularly or in combination fails to anticipate or fairly suggest the limitations of the independent claims, in such a manner that a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 or 103 would be proper.

Specifically regarding claim 1, the prior art taken either singly or in combination fails to anticipate or fairly suggest a solid immersion lens including a spherical surface and a bottom surface that is attached to the observed object with that bottom surface being of toriodal shape; recited together in combination with the totality of particular features/limitations recited therein. For further reasons for allowance see applicant's remarks pages 5-8, filed 1/3/2008.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the toroidal surface feature must be shown. No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet,

even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

4. The following changes to the drawings have been approved by the examiner and agreed upon by applicant: The toroidal surface feature will be given a reference numeral in the drawings (see objection above). In order to avoid abandonment of the application, applicant must make these above agreed upon drawing changes (See Interview summary of 3/31/2008).
5. If the above objection is satisfactorily addressed in the applicant's amendment the above cited objection will be removed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES R. GREECE whose telephone number is (571)272-3711. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ricky Mack can be reached on 571-272-2333. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

James R Greece
Patent Examiner
571-272-3711

/J. R. G./
Examiner, Art Unit 2873
3/28/2008

/Ricky L. Mack/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2873